



# University of Hawaii at Manoa

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**HB 24  
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION  
FOR A REVIEW OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS**

**Statement for  
House Committee on  
Planning, Energy and Environmental Protection  
Public Hearing - February 2, 1989**

**By  
Jacquelin Miller, Environmental Center  
John Harrison, Environmental Center  
Doak Cox, former Director of Environmental Center  
L. Stephen Lau, Water Resources Research Center  
Edwin Murabayashi, Water Resources Research Center  
Peter Rappa, Sea Grant  
Bryce Decker, Geography**

HB 24 recognizes the need for a comprehensive review of the statutory provisions of HRS 343 to ensure the effectiveness of the present Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) system and proposes to commission the Environmental Center of the University of Hawaii to: (1) undertake this review; (2) publish a descriptive handbook of the EIS system; and (3) report the findings and recommendations to the 1990 state legislature.

The Environmental Center undertook an extensive review of the Hawaii State EIS system in 1978. Since then, changes to HRS 343 have occurred and related statutory material has been enacted in other chapters. We concur that a review of the present system is in order. Given our long term experience with the EIS system, access to information resources, and the benefit of our earlier review, we believe that a comprehensive review of the efficacy of the provisions of chapter 343 as cited in paragraph (1) page 1, would be an appropriate task for the Environmental Center to undertake. Similarly, it would be appropriate to report our findings and recommendations to the legislature as provided by paragraph (3). The provision for consultation with the office of environmental quality control, the environmental council, and other government agencies and interested parties in conducting this review is most appropriate, and we concur fully with this directive.

We have serious reservations about the timeliness of the task requested in paragraph (2) page 1. The purpose of the review and report proposed in paragraphs (1) and (3) is to ensure the effectiveness of the EIS system and to make our findings and recommendations available for statutory or administrative changes if appropriate. Preparation of an EIS handbook should be deferred until after legislative review of the findings and recommendations afforded by our review. This would assure that the handbook produced will be a timely document.

Section 3 of the bill requests that the Environmental Center submit a report of its findings and recommendation to the 1990 legislature. We request that this date be changed to 1991. Assuming that the scope of review intended by HB 24 is a revision and update of our earlier EIS System Review and that funds will not be available until July 1, 1989, we cannot assure the legislature of a report by December 1989.

Section 4 of the bill would provide \$40,000 to the Office of Environmental Quality Control for the purposes of this Act. This amount will be sufficient assuming the 1991 date is acceptable and the descriptive handbook is omitted from the scope of work.